

## Personal Inventory Questions

### *Instructions to Participants:*

We are going to start an activity which is both a **listening and speaking exercise** and an opportunity for you to explore those influences, incidents, and people in your past that have shaped your thinking and feelings.

You will be partnered with another person and will be asked a series of questions that you are to answer within a limited time period (2-3 minutes).

The important difference in this activity is that when one partner is speaking, the other may only listen. You may encourage your partner non-verbally with nods, gestures, or facial expressions but only one person may speak at a time.

Each of you will be allowed to answer the same question before you move on to another partner.

This will continue until the last question has been asked. There are generally 5-6 questions asked during this exercise.

At the end of the question and answer period, the whole group will be asked for feedback. This section is very important because it may help you to get in touch with the feelings you have as a result of participating in this exercise.

1. What is your ethnic and/or cultural heritage? What are you most proud of from that heritage?
2. When and how did you first become aware that there was such a thing as racial and ethnic differences, and that people were treated differently on the basis of those differences?
3. Growing up, what contact did you have with people whose racial and ethnic heritage was different from your own. What kind of guidance or models did you have for relationships with those people?
4. How did important adults in your life, such as parents, teachers, coaches, clergy, etc., help you to understand or interpret your experiences with different racial groups, and what was their main advice about these groups?

5. What was the cruelest thing someone from a different race or ethnicity did to you? Today, what is your greatest fear about what someone from a different racial or ethnic group do to you? Where do you think that fear comes from?
6. Name a time when you stood up for your rights or the rights of others. What did you do? What do you wish you'd done? What can you tell us about your experience growing up that would help us understand where you got the courage or strength to do what you did?
7. How has racism kept you isolated and separate from others? If it were possible, how would you limit the effects of racism and prejudice in your life?
8. How do feel about the changing demographics of your parish, diocese, or community? If there have not been any changes, why not?

***Discussion: Invite volunteer responses.***

How was that exercise for you?

Did you learn or hear anything new?

Did you remember something you had forgotten from you past?

Did you learn anything new about yourself and/or your family?

What was the most difficult question for you to answer?

Was there anything surprising?

Are there any insights from this exercise that you would like to share with the group?